

**Mayor and City Council of New Castle**  
**Public Hearing**  
**New Castle Town Hall–Delaware Street–New Castle**  
**Tuesday, March 31, 2004–6:30 PM**

**Roll Call**

**Present:**

|                     |                        |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| President Castagno  | Councilman DiAngelo    |
| Councilwoman Miller | Councilman Padmalingam |
| Councilman Reese    |                        |

**Others Present:**

Treasurer Janet Carlin, Finance/Human Resources Manager Marian Delaney, City Administrator Bob Martin, City Attorney Gregory Sarnecki

---

President Castagno called the meeting to order with the pledge of allegiance and invited those in attendance to comment on the agenda items.

**Authorization for Funding for the Wharf Railing:** City Administrator revealed that no one had appeared at the prebid meeting, but that two bids had been received for designing, manufacturing, and installing the railing to be constructed on Battery Park's wharf. Two firms submitted bids. Merit Costruction's submitted a bid of \$46,000. Backflips submitted a bid of \$33,067.

Councilwoman Miller asked if the proposed fences meet the agreed upon specifications. She also asked if the fence is to be powder coated. President Castagno assured her that the fence conforms to the Council's requirements.

Mr. Martin emphasized that one requirement is that the contractor submit a sample of the design before final choice is made. Councilperson Padmalingam asked how soon BackFlips could produce a sample. Mr. Para replied that the fence design is in process and that his company would try to present a sample fence and a design in time for the next Council meeting. Mr. Martin hopes that the fence can be installed by May 1, 2004

Councilperson DiAngelo moved to accept the low bid if the fence design meets specifications. Councilperson Miller seconded the motion. Councilpersons DiAngelo, Miller, Padmalingam, and Reese all voted to accept the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Authorization to Seek Grant Funding for the Wharf Fence:** President Castagno noted that the next step is to pursue funding, and that grants may be available. Councilperson Miller moved to seek grant funding for the fence. Councilperson DiAngelo seconded the motion. Councilpersons DiAngelo, Miller, Padmalingam, and Reese all voted to accept the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Authorization to Seek Bids for Insurance:** President Castagno noted that the City's current insurance company had increased its premiums substantially. He asked if the Councils wished to bid out the City's insurance contract. Councilperson Miller noted that because the current insurer had raised its cost by \$143,000, the City has no choice but to solicit bids. President Castagno disclosed that the City's agents work with a limited number of firms, and that the Council owes taxpayers the chance to save money by going beyond these contacts.

Councilperson Miller agreed that the Council must explore all options. She asked about the procedure for soliciting bids. President Castagno answered that the method used is the request for proposal (RFP). Councilperson DiAngelo asked Mr. Martin to provide information on where to send the RFPs. He also asked how other municipalities address the problem. Mr. Martin replied that insurance companies are not eager to insure municipalities and that many small cities can't afford insurance.

Councilperson Reese suggested consulting Smyrna and Newport about their insurance costs. Councilperson DiAngelo agreed that soliciting bids is a good idea and asked if increasing the City's deductible would help lower costs. He asked about the current liability for each incident. Mr. Martin reported that three or four years ago, the City took a higher deductible because its insurance rate was rising. The savings totaled about \$2,000 a year. He will have more information about deductibles at the next Council meeting. Councilperson DiAngelo asked that he include a range of possible deductibles and their impact on insurance costs.

Councilperson Padmalingam emphasized that since the City has eliminated most dangerous situations, insurance costs should be lower. President Castagno reported that the lion's share of the increase is based on the State's increase in Workmen's Compensation.

Councilperson Miller moved to put the insurance policy out to bids and to provide justification for the insurance payments. Councilperson Reese seconded the motion. Councilpersons DiAngelo, Miller, Padmalingam, and Reese all voted to accept the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Authorization to Dispose of City Parcels:** Councilperson Miller reported that the City must observe a codified procedure before selling off parcels to private citizens. She further reported that the City's current parcels to be sold are not buildable. Mr. Martin reported that the only one of the parcel is valuable, and that the City must receive fair market value for any sold. Councilpersons Miller and Padmalingam asked about the number and the location of the parcels. Councilperson DiAngelo revealed that some are abandoned and unused. He noted that one

property sold by secret bid contained about 5 houses. Mayor Klingmeyer said that St. Peter's uses one parcel as a parking lot. Councilperson Reese noted that one is on Grogan Street in Van Dyke Village. Another is on Bull Avenue.

Mr. Martin said that there are about 10 properties, some acquired through tax sales. He suggested devising a map to pinpoint their exact locations. Councilperson Miller advocated having this information available for the next meeting so that the Council can make an informed decision. She agreed that the City should sell them. President Castagno suggested offering the parcels to the Trustees first and then to Municipal Services. He then advised tabling the issue until a more precise map of properties and their locations is available at the next Council meeting.

Councilperson Miller moved to table the resolution. Councilperson Reese seconded the motion. Councilpersons DiAngelo, Miller, Padmalingam, and Reese all voted to accept the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Councilperson DiAngelo moved to adjourn the meeting and to go into an executive session. Councilperson Miller seconded the motion. Councilpersons DiAngelo, Miller, Padmalingam, and Reese all voted to accept the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The special meeting regular adjourned at 7:45 PM.

#### **Next Meeting**

The next regular meeting will be held at 7:00 PM on April 13, 2004, in the Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Darcy Mozer, City Clerk